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S E C R E T SANAA 000605

SIPDIS

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DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/NEA, DS/IP/ITA, DS/ICI/PII, S/CT,
S/ES-O, RSOS FOR ABU DHABI, AMMAN, ANKARA, BEIRUT,
DAMASCUS, ISLAMABAD, LONDON, MANAMA, BANGKOK, NEW DELHI,
CAIRO, RIYADH,

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/27/2013

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [PREL](#) [YM](#) [COUNTER TERRORISM](#) [EAC](#)

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP REGARDING HOST GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST
POSSIBLE EMBASSY ATTACK

REF: A. TD-314/17398-03

[B](#). SANAA 00602

[C](#). SANAA 00603

Classified By: RSO TIMOTHY E. LAAS, FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Summary: On March 27 at 0145 local, Yemen's Political Security Organization (PSO) officers arrested three members of a terrorist cell and confiscated explosives per REFTELS. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (S/NF) On the afternoon of 27 March 2003, the Ambassador called on PSO Chief Gamish to discuss follow-up to possible Iraqi attack plot described in REFTELS. The PSO Director informed Ambassador three suspected IIS operatives were arrested by PSO at 0145 on 3/27. Explosives were also found in the house, apparently confirming threat information from REFTEL source.

[1](#)3. (SBU) RSO considers the post's current security configuration as appropriate to adequately protect USG personnel and facilities while in the "Stand Fast" mode. Under Stand Fast operations the potential for an attack against a "soft target" is minimized because movements of Embassy officers are restricted to essential movements only in a armored vehicle monitored by the RSO with random ROYG marked police car escorts.

[1](#)4. (S/NF) Post has been in a Stand Fast posture since receiving the preliminary threat information. As noted in REFTEL A, source indicated that residences of the DAT and Public Affairs Officer were to be targeted along with the Egyptian Embassy and a local travel agency that works for British Airways. The American Embassy was identified by REFTEL source as a surveilled potential target, but was dropped from the target list as "too difficult". Source indicated that the attack cell intended to throw a small IED timed or remote control device over the wall of the selected Embassy residences. RSO notes that such an act would run a substantial risk of detection and armed confrontation due to perimeter security coverage which includes one armed ROYG officer at the front gate, "as directed" Surveillance Detection activities, PSO spot coverage on the residential perimeters, one mobile patrol unit visiting each post three times per one eight hour shift, and hourly radio checks with one unarmed LGF post on the inside of the each compound.

[1](#)5. (SBU) U.S. Embassy-related facilities in Sanaa including residences have aggressive perimeter and access control policies. Embassy security was recently made more restrictive with a new prohibition against Foreign Service National's parking on the Embassy compound. Post will be reassessing all there arrangements in light of this experience, and seek to learn as much as possible from source about how U.S.-related sites were surveilled and targets chosen.

HULL